

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 070182

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INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 SS-14 FILE-01 SSO-00 ADP-00 /023 R

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/ ARAPHEL

APPROVED BY: NEA: ARAPHEL

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O 150230 Z APR 73 ZFF4

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TODEP 5

FOR ASST SEC SISCO.

FOL TEL SENT JIDDA, TEHRAN, KUWAIT, LONDON, SANAA FROM
SECSTATE 140102 Z APR 73:

QUOTE: STATE 070182

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, IR, SA, MU, YE

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARABIAN - IRANIAN COORDINATION IN SECURITY
MATTERS

REF: JIDDA 1450; TEHRAN 2372

SECDEF FOR ISA

1. WE ARE CONCERNED AT INDICATIONS PROVIDED REFTELS THAT
SAUDIS ARE SEEMINGLY RELUCTANT TO ENTER INTO FRANK DIALOGUE
WITH IRANIANS ON PENINSULAR SECURITY MATTERS. GRANTED THAT
KING FAISAL, FOR POLITICAL AS WELL AS PERSONAL REASONS, MAY
NOT WISH TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVES TO ARRANGE FOR TRANSFER OF
IRANIAN- OWNED F-5 MUNITIONS TO SAUDI ARABIA. STILL, THIS
WOULD APPEAR BE SHIFT IN SAUDI POLICY POSITION INASMUCH AS
PRECEDENT FOR SUCH TRANSFER WAS ESTABLISHED BY LOAN TO
SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY OF IRANIAN 106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLES AND
ANTI- AIRCRAFT GUNS SEVERAL YEARS AGO. FAILURE OF SAUDIS TO
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PAGE 02 STATE 070182

DISCUSS PENINSULAR SECURITY QUESTIONS WITH IRANIANS
MOREOVER STRIKES US AS STEP BACKWARD FROM BASIS FOR FRANK
DIALOGUE SEEMINGLY LAID AT TIME OF SAQQAF VISIT TO TEHRAN
LAST DECEMBER-

2. RECURRING HINTS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES THAT SAUDIS ARE
DISTURBED IN SOME WAY BY PRESENCE OF IRANIAN SPECIAL
FORCES AND HELICOPTERS IN OMAN, AS WELL AS IRAN'S HESI-
TATION (MENTIONED BY KHALATBARY) TO PROVIDE MILITARY

SUPPORT FOR YEMEN LEST IT UPSET THE ARABS POINT TO NEED
FOR EARLY AND FRANK DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN RIYADH AND TEHRAN
ABOUT THEIR RESPECTIVE ROLES AND ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORTING
PENINSULA STATES THREATENED BY PDRY AGGRESSION/ SUBVERSION.

SUCH CONSULTATION NEED NOT BE IN CONTEXT OF DRAWING UP
"SECURITY TREATY" OR OTHER FORMAL ALLIANCE BUT SHOULD IN-
STEAD FOCUS ON ASSURING THAT EACH SIDE IS AWARE OF WHAT
OTHER IS INTENDING TO DO TO HELP IN ORDER THAT COM-
PETITION OR OVERLAPPING CAN BE AVOIDED. IF SAUDIS ARE IN
FACT UNEASY ABOUT IRANIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE INITIATIVES
IN OMAN OR YEMEN, THEN THEY WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO LET
IRANIANS KNOW WHAT THEY THEMSELVES ARE PLANNING TO DO AND
SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH IRANIANS CAN BE HELPFUL IN SUPPORT-
ING SAUDI EFFORTS. IF SAUDIS CHOOSE TO LEAVE IRANIANS
IN DARK ABOUT THEIR AID PROGRAMS AND INTENTIONS IN YAR
AND OMAN, RESULT COULD BE THAT IRANIANS WILL ACT WITHOUT
CONSULTING SAUDIS. NOT ONLY DOES THIS RISK WASTEFUL
DUPLICATION OF EFFORT BUT IT COULD SERVE FURTHER TO IN-
CREASE ANY SUSPICIONSSAUDIS MAY HAVE THAT IRAN INTENDS
PLAY LONE HAND IN PENINSULA AND GULF.

3. OUR POLICY IS TO CONTINUE ENCOURAGE BOTH SAUDIS AND
IRANIANS TO ASSUME PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGIONAL
SECURITY. ACCORDINGLY, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT USG SHOULD
SUBSTITUTE ITSELF IN ROLE OF MIDDLEMAN BETWEEN TEHRAN
AND RIYADH, WHETHER PURPOSE IS TO ARRANGE TRANSFER OF
MILITARY MATERIAL OR TO SUPPLY INFORMATION ON EACH OTHER'S
MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO THIRD COUNTRIES. TO DO SO
MERELY INVITES CONTINUING RECOURSE TO THIS TACTIC BY
EITHER SIDE AND VITIATES OUR POLICY OF STIMULATING GREATER
REGIONAL COOPERATION AND SELF-RELIANCE. INSTEAD, WE CON-
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PAGE 03 STATE 070182

SIDER USG EFFORTS SHOULD MOST USEFULLY BE EMPLOYED IN

PRESSING BOTH SIDES, AND ESPECIALLY SAUDIS, IN GETTING ON WITH DEVELOPING KIND OF DIALOGUE WITH EACH OTHER THAT WOULD GENUINELY FACILITATE MEANINGFUL COORDINATED PLANNING OF ASSISTANCE TO OTHER PENINSULAR STATES.

4. FOR JIDDA. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR THOUGHTS ON HOW DIRECT IRANIAN- SAUDI DIALOGUE COULD BE ENCOURAGED. AT YOUR DISCRETION, YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO DISCUSS POINTS RAISED TEHRAN REFTEL AND PARA 1-3 ABOVE WITH SAQQAF PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE FOR COM CONFERENCE. SINCE SAQQAF (NEXT PERHAPS TO KAMAL ADHAM) HAS BEEN SENIOR SAUDI OFFICIAL MOST CLOSELY INVOLVED IN SAUDI COORDINATION WITH IRAN ON SECURITY MATTERS, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE HIS VIEWS ON HOW SAUDIS SEE QUESTION OF COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH IRAN DEVELOPING.

5. FOR TEHRAN. SUGGEST YOU INFORM KHALATBARI THAT WE OURSELVES DO NOT POSSESS FULL INFORMATION ON SAUDI ASSISTANCE TO OMAN AND YEMEN. YOU COULD ADD THAT WE TOO BELIEVE MORE CONSULTATION BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN IS REQUIRED AND THAT WE HAVE REQUESTED AMBASSADOR THACHER TO GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION PRIOR HIS VISITING TEHRAN TO HOW SAUDIS MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH IRANIANS ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE ISSUES. ROGERS UNQUOTE ROGERS

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE070182
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/ ARAPHEL
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730444/aaaaipoz.tel
Line Count: 144
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 JIDDA 1450, 73 TEHRAN 2372
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30-Jan-2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <22 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980121
Subject: SAUDI ARABIAN - IRANIAN COORDINATION IN SECURITY MATTERS
TAGS: MASS, IR, MU, SA, YE
To: CINCPAC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005